(b) if so, the details of discussions held and the consensus arrived at the Conference; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c) A Conference of Governors was held on 2nd and 3rd June, 1997 at which the leaders of political parties were also invited. The main theme of the Conference was "The Role of the Constitutional Head, when, following an election, no party or combination of parties appears to have secured a majority."

In the Conference, the leaders of major political parties and other participants shared their views on the complexities inherent in the situation forming the theme of the Conference. It is felt that the Conference may well have succeeded in initiating and enlarging a wider process of appreciation and assessment of the subject. This will lead to a more informed out-look all around. In turn, this will make the working of the Constitution in certain problematic situations smoother and more transparent.

The Government proposes to continue the dialogue on this and other subjects which strengthen our democratic polity.

[Translation]

Patenting of Botanical and Animal Species

950. SHRI LALIT ORAON : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has rich abundance of 45 thousand botanical species and 95 thousand animal species but out of them 10 per cent species have been got patent by the foreign agencies in foreign countries; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) and (b) In India while quantification of the abundance in botanical, and Zoological species may not be possible, so far over 49,000 plant species and 81,000 animal species have been identified and described by the Botanical Survey of India and Zoological Survey of India respectively. The Government has not received any information/complaint about patenting of 10 per cent of species thus identified.

[English]

Fast Track Power Project

951. SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) carried out any Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) of fast track power project in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, project-wise,

(c) the reaction of the Government to the findings/ observations of NEERI; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure that the environmental guidelines are followed while executing the projects?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) No, Sir. The National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) has not carried out any Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of fast track power projects in different parts of the country.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) The stipulations laid down in the environmental clearance letter are regularly monitored by the Regional Offices of the Ministry, the Central Pollution Control Board and the respective State Pollution Control Boards for their implementation.

Chief Minister's Conference

952. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Chief Ministers' Conference was held in New Delhi on 24 May, 1997 to discuss on providing effective and responsible administration;

(b) if so, the opinion expressed by different Chief Ministers;

(c) whether any resolution was adopted to revitalise the administration and to reform the public services;

(d) if so, the salient features thereof; and

(e) the action plan formulated, if any, to adopt and implement those resolutions?